

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PSC APPROVES 2-1-1 DIALING FOR HUMAN SERVICES INFORMATION
IN DODGE, SAUNDERS, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES**

LINCOLN – The Nebraska Public Service Commission granted an application at its weekly meeting February 10 to provide 2-1-1 three-digit dialing to access information and referrals for human services in Dodge, Saunders, and Washington Counties.

The application was filed by United Way of the Midlands, headquartered in Omaha, which also operates First Call for Help services in the Omaha metropolitan area of Dodge and Sarpy Counties.

In approving the application, the Commission noted that three-digit dialing had already been sanctioned by the Commission for Dodge County (Fremont). The February 10 decision expanded that authority to Saunders and Washington Counties. United Way of the Midlands has until July 1 to implement its 2-1-1 program in Saunders and Washington Counties.

In its application, United Way of the Midlands said it wanted authority to operate 2-1-1 services in the additional counties “so that their citizens, especially their vulnerable populations, may have easier access to health and human services.” United Way filed the application on behalf of Three Rivers Public Health Department of Fremont, which operates in Dodge, Saunders, and Washington Counties.

In another action, the Commission also approved an application by United Way for similar 2-1-1 dialing for the four central-Nebraska counties of Hall, Hamilton, Howard, and Merrick.

Third District Commissioner Lowell Johnson of North Bend, who represents all three of the counties in eastern Nebraska, said, “The designation of the 2-1-1 number for the area will certainly go a long way towards meeting the needs of residents by providing easy access to health and human services information.”

Noting the limited number of three-digit numbers available, Johnson said, “This is a valuable addition to the services accessed by three-digit abbreviated dialing. The Public Service

Commission set aside 2-1-1 for this particular service in recognition of the benefits to the residents of these three counties”.

Other three-digit designations in use in Nebraska include 9-1-1 for emergency police, fire, and ambulance service; 7-1-1 for access to the Nebraska Relay Service; and 5-1-1 for road condition information.

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